

CLAIMS

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1 Broadcasting unit (BCU2) for broadcasting in an access network (ACCESS NETWORK) channels (TV1, TV2) of a distributive interactive service to a plurality of
5 user terminals (UT1, UT2, UT3), said broadcasting unit (BCU2) thereto comprising:

a. channel selecting means (CHANNEL SELECTOR), adapted to select amongst available channels (TV1, TV2, TV3, TV4) at an input of said broadcasting unit (BCU2) said channels (TV1, TV2) to be broadcasted;

b. channel broadcasting means (CHANNEL BROADCAST), coupled to said
10 channel selecting means (CHANNEL SELECTOR), and adapted to broadcast said channels (TV1, TV2) to said user terminals (UT1, UT2, UT3);

c. request receiving means (REQUEST RX), adapted to receive from one of said user terminals (UT1, UT2, UT3) first type request information indicative for at least one requested channel (TV1; TV6); and

d. request handling means (REQUEST HANDLER), coupled between said
15 request receiving means (REQUEST RX) and a control input of said channel selecting means (CHANNEL SELECTOR), and adapted to interpret said first type request information and to control said channel selecting means (CHANNEL SELECTOR) to select said at least one requested channel (TV1),

20 CHARACTERIZED IN THAT said request handling means (REQUEST HANDLER) further is adapted to check whether said at least one requested channel (TV1; TV6) is available at said input of said broadcasting unit (BCU2) and in that said broadcasting unit (BCU2) further comprises:

e. request generating means (REQUEST GENERATOR), coupled to said
25 request handling means (REQUEST HANDLER) and adapted to generate in case said at least one requested channel (TV6) is not available at said input of said broadcasting unit (BCU2) second type request information indicative for said unavailable requested channel (TV6); and

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f. request transmitting means (REQUEST TX), coupled to said request generating means (REQUEST GENERATOR) and adapted to transmit said second type request information to another broadcasting unit (BCU1).

5 2. Broadcasting unit (BCU2) according to claim 1,

CHARACTERIZED IN THAT said request generating means (REQUEST GENERATOR) is adapted to generate said second type request information in accordance with a standard zapping protocol already used for said first type request information.

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3. Broadcasting unit (BCU2) according to claim 1,

CHARACTERIZED IN THAT said request generating means (REQUEST GENERATOR) is adapted to generate said second type request information in accordance with a standard signalling protocol.

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4. Access network (ACCESS NETWORK) enabled to broadcast channels (TV1, TV2) of a distributive interactive service to a plurality of user terminals (UT1, UT2, UT3), said access network (ACCESS NETWORK) comprising a plurality of broadcasting units (BCU2, BCU3) as defined by claim 1 organised in a multi-level topology.

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